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Retiring CIA Chief Has Served Every President Since Woodrow Wilson

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WASHINGTON (UPI) — Allen W. Dulles who is retiring later this year as chief of the Central Intelligence Agency, has served every president since Woodrow Wilson.

Now 68, the brother of the late Secretary of State John Foster Dulles has been director of the hush-hush cloak-and-dagger agency since Feb. 26, 1953, when President Eisenhower chose him for the post. But he actually started government service at age 23 as a diplomat in Europe.

One of John F. Kennedy's first acts as President was to ask Dulles to stay on.

Perhaps the high point in his career came in World War II when, operating from Switzerland, he formed a spy network that reached deep into Nazi Germany. It produced advance information on the V-1 and V-2 rockets, played a role in the bomb plot against Adolf Hitler, and was given much credit for the surrender of German troops in northern Italy in 1945.

Perhaps the low points — in terms of what the public is likely to remember about the CIA under Dulles' direction — were the U-2 "spy plane" incident which broke up Eisenhower's Paris summit conference and the Cuban invasion fiasco.

Rare Press Statement

But blame and credit is difficult to pin down when it comes to the CIA. In a rare press statement about itself, the agency said "It does not confirm or deny published reports, whether good or bad; never alibis; never explains its organization; never identifies its personnel, except the few at the top echelons; and will not discuss its budget, its methods of operations, or its sources of information."

But Dulles in his role as master spy has succeeded in gaining fame despite the secrecy aspects of his work.

For his wartime service, he received from the government the Medal for Merit and Presidential Citation, and the Medal of Freedom, as well as honors from

France, Belgium and Italy.

Dulles served as a member of the U.S. diplomatic corps in Vienna, Bern, Constantinople, Berlin and Washington.

Peace Delegate

He was a member of the American commission to negotiate peace at the Paris Peace Conference in 1918-19.

He also served as legal adviser to the U. S. delegations to two later Geneva conferences.

It was during World War II that his spy career blossomed. He was chief of the Office of Strategic Services in Switzerland.

After the war, in addition to practicing law, Dulles served as a government adviser, with emphasis on foreign aid and German policy.

In 1948, he was appointed chairman of a three-man committee to survey the American intelligence system, and then in late 1950 joined the staff of CIA Director Walter Bedell Smith.

Now there has been another survey of the U.S. intelligence system, and there will be another director.

One of the opinions of Dulles' work which the CIA included in his biography was given by Ilya Ehrenberg in Moscow's Pravda, Dec. 31, 1951:

" . . . even if the spy, Allen Dulles, should arrive in heaven through somebody's absent mindedness, he would begin to blow up the clouds, mine the stars, and slaughter the angels . . . "